

Minutes

Meeting **London Resilience Forum**

Date **11 June 2020**

Time **2.00 pm**

Place **Via Microsoft Teams**

Ref	ACTION	OWNER
5.16	LRG to proceed with actions outlined in the recommendations of this paper.	LRG
7.8	Forum Members to feedback to their organisations the request for support on messaging on travel times, walking and cycling routes, and use of face coverings on public transport.	All

Present:

Fiona Twycross AM, Chair
 JP Graham, GLA
 Robin Merrett, MOPAC,
 Claire Aubrey-Robson, MPS
 Hector McKoy, City of London Police
 Pauline Cranmer, London Ambulance Service
 Graham Ellis, London Fire Brigade
 Terry Leach, Maritime & Coastguard Agency
 Mark Sawyer, Local Authorities Panel
 Doug Flight, London Councils
 Chloe Sellwood, NHS England (London)
 Edward Wynne-Evans, Public Health England
 Cantor Mocke, Environment Agency
 Monica Cooney, Transport Sector Panel
 Guy Huckle, Network Rail
 Bill D'Albertanson, Utilities Sector Panel
 Don Randall, Business Sector Panel
 Alex Milne, Voluntary Sector Panel
 Luke Miller, Faith Sector Panel
 Jeremy Bagshaw, HQ London District
 Chris Webb, London Resilience Communications Group
 Jane Everton, MHCLG
 Gideon Levitt, MHCLG
 Mark Rogers, Met Office

London Resilience Group:

Kelly Dallen, London Resilience Group

Toby Gould, London Resilience Group

John Hetherington, Head of London Resilience Group

Jeremy Reynolds, London Resilience Group

GLA: Felicity Harris, Board Officer (clerk)

Also in attendance

Steve Feely, MPS

Kevin Fenton, Public Health England

Robert Gleed, London Fire Brigade

Agnes Jung, Public Health England

Peter Lavery, Business Sector Panel

Jonathan Smith, London Fire Brigade

Sarah Street, HQ London District

Mary-Clare Walsh, GLA

1 Chair's Opening Remarks

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Members to the Forum and expressed her gratitude to all partners for their roles in the response to Covid-19. Particular thanks were given to John Barradell as Strategic Coordination Group Chair, and Eleanor Kelly, as Co-Chair . This would now develop into the Transition Management Group.

2 Introductions and Apologies for Absence

- 2.1 Apologies were received from: Diana Luchford, MOPAC; Joseph McDonald, MPS; Richard Waight, City of London Police; John Barradell, Local Authorities Panel; John O'Brien, London Councils; Martin Machray, NHS England (London); Simon Moody, Environment Agency; and Emma Spragg, Voluntary Sector Panel.

3 Minutes and Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The Forum confirmed the minutes of the meeting of the Forum (64 01) held on 6 February 2020 as an accurate record.
- 3.2 With reference to matters arising, the Forum received an update on action 3.3 under Item 7. On action 4.5, it was noted that a formal process for communications and mapping systems between the London Fire Brigade (LFB) and Environment Agency (EA) would be established and that the operational policy department at LFB would be leading. Actions 5.13 and 7.3 had been delayed by the ongoing Covid-19 response. MHCLG and the College of Policing were considering the possibility of running London-specific MAGIC courses in response to action 6.15 but work had been postponed while the Covid-19 response work continued. All other actions had been completed.

4 Current and Emerging Risks to London

a) **MPS:**

- i. **Threats:** The MPS confirmed that the threat from international terrorism was substantial and that a change in that status was not anticipated. Further protests were expected to take place in central London organized by the Black Lives Matter movement and right-wing groups. Sufficient police resources would be made available to allow for peaceful protests and to take any enforcement action if required.

b) **MHCLG:**

- ii. **Hazards:** The MHCLG representative confirmed that current risks included: short-term flood risk; a period of elevated wild fire risk over the summer months; increased demands on water supply; and the potential for increased industrial action in response to tensions over perceived safety of work places. It was noted that critical freight continues to flow well across the border, though there were potential risks associated with decisions on quarantine measures to be made in the weeks to follow. The Department for Transport was not actively expecting any disruption, but officers would continue to monitor the situation.

c) **Met Office:**

- iii. **Weather forecast:** It was noted that Bryony May, who had been the Advisor for London for the last few years, had been promoted to a Senior Advisor role. It was confirmed that Mark Rogers would be the Met Office representative on the LRF from this point on. It was noted that 2020 had been a year of extremes, with very wet conditions over the winter, followed by a dry Spring, and a notably dry and sunny May. More recent unsettled conditions were expected to continue in the short-term interwoven with occasional warm and sunny spells. Mixed conditions would continue through the rest of June, with warmer than average conditions expected over the longer-term period from June to August.

5 Special Agenda Items

a) Covid-19 Initial Learning (Paper 64 02)

- 5.1 The Head of the London Resilience Group presented a paper on initial learning from Covid-19, noting that an initial assessment had been commissioned to identify lessons from the first wave, which would inform preparations for any subsequent waves. Seven initial learning themes had been established and it was anticipated that scoping projects and further investigation into each of these areas would be pursued.

Scope of a Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG)

- 5.2 Members noted that the nature of the Covid-19 pandemic prompted a bespoke response from the SCG which, while remaining within the Strategic Coordination Protocol (SCP), had resulted in a much wider scope of the planned SCG parameters. Members were asked to consider whether the SCP was appropriate for a protracted incident and whether a review of the risk management process would be required. The recommendation outlined in the paper was that

the SCP review be reprioritised and broadened to consider the need for differing protocols for sudden onset and protracted incidents.

- 5.3 It was suggested that the regularity of SCG meetings ought to be considered and set at the start of a protracted incident in order to set tangible response timeframes. The NHS representative also suggested that a balance needed to be established between an SCG being supportive and directive versus being assurance focused. Members noted that a key part of the proposal was to consider whether the SCP should be broadened to cover all types of incidents or if a separate document ought to be established for longer-term, protracted incidents. Some members felt that a review early in 2021 would be useful so that learning from other incidents, including the fire at Grenfell Tower, could be incorporated.
- 5.4 **DECISION:** The Forum agreed that the current review of the SCP should continue and be brought to the next LRF for approval. The initial learning recommendation would be considered alongside this and for future editions.

Roles and responsibilities

- 5.5 Members heard that a number of bespoke sub-groups had been established in response to Covid-19 and that the new tactical coordinating group (TCG) arrangements had been working well. Members were asked to consider how wider sub-groups could be managed during protracted incidents and whether terms of reference ought to be drafted for each. It was also suggested that the TCG arrangements were formalised.

Finance and staffing for protracted incidents

- 5.6 Members heard that one of the biggest risks throughout a protracted incident was a lack of clarity on funding streams for new burdens or additional requirements, as well as ownership and staffing. A lack of clarity on funding and ownership where issues were not the sole responsibility of a single partner had the potential to make it difficult to establish long-term staffing arrangements to manage the response. Members' views were sought on the recommendation to review London response staffing resources for protracted incidents and the finance mechanisms used to fund such responses.
- 5.7 It was suggested that graduate trainees had been a useful source of additional staffing for Network Rail and that it was reasonably straightforward to mobilise large numbers quickly.
- 5.8 Members noted that changes in legislation may be required to support staffing and funding arrangements and that conversations around the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA) had predated the Covid-19 response. Although there was no immediate intention to review the CCA due to resources being committed elsewhere in recent months, MHCLG confirmed that this was something that would be considered.

Use of data analysis and programme management skills/tools in a response

- 5.9 The Forum noted that, in support of protracted incidents, different toolkits and skills were likely to be required. Members' views were sought on: standardised toolkits for SCGs/TCGs

and sub-groups; the use of data collation, analysis and display; and the cost/benefit of data demand in providing assurance, supporting situational awareness and decision-making.

- 5.10 Members noted that some partners already carry out a significant amount of data analysis so it would be worth seeking their support during incidents of this nature. The Head of the London Resilience Group agreed that existing provision ought to be built into the review and it was noted that partners not directly involved in the SCG would also be contacted for their views.

Strategic Co-ordination Centre facilities

- 5.11 It was noted that the Strategic Co-ordination Centre (SCC) located at MPS Lambeth had not been used for this incident and no other formal location had been identified to host the SCG, which had been hosted at the London Fire Brigade headquarters. Members were asked to consider the benefits and necessity of co-location versus remote co-ordination and whether the SCC at MPS Lambeth was a suitable permanent facility for London. It was suggested that a scoping project be conducted for a permanent SCC facility to house future responses.
- 5.12 It was agreed that a scoping project outlining all possible options would be useful.

Information Technology

- 5.13 Members heard that having a significant number of those involved in the response working remotely with no commonality in technology usage across all partners had proved difficult at times and had made clear the need for further investment in and collaboration on technology. Members were advised that working collectively may come at a cost and that the solution to this issue may result in suggested expenditure on various systems or platforms. Members raised concerns about their ability to secure funding, particularly at a localised level for otherwise national organisations. Members were assured that scoping would be based on a realistic outcome and that conversations with partners to establish an achievable practical solution would be arranged.

SCG communications support

- 5.14 Members heard that over 1,000 messages had been produced by the SCG's communications team following engagement with the news/broadcast media during the response. It was recognised early on in the response that there was a clear need for dedicated SCG communications facilities and support. Members agreed that multi-agency communications should be reviewed for protracted incidents where the lead agency principle is not suitable for the volume of communications required.
- 5.15 **DECISION:-** The Forum endorsed the recommendations outlined in the paper.
- 5.16 **ACTION:-** LRG to proceed with actions outlined in the recommendations of this paper.

6 Progress Against London Resilience Programme

a) Work Programme (Papers 64 03 and 64 04):

- 6.1 The Head of the London Resilience Group gave an overview of the Partnership Work Programme Proposal, which included prioritising: risk assessment and planning assumptions; the coordination capabilities, the response on Brexit preparations and concurrent major events; and learning and training. It was noted that some partners had been heavily committed to and involved in the response to Covid-19 while others had less of a role in the response phase. It was noted that while partners were keen to be involved in priorities that fell outside of the Covid-19 response, it was important to keep in mind that this was an exceptionally complex incident that was not yet over.
- 6.2 **DECISION:-** The Forum noted the update and endorsed the recommendations set out in the Work Programme paper.

7 Agency and Sector Updates

7.1 Greater London Authority, – This information has been redacted.

7.2 In response to Covid-19, the GLA had stepped up its emergency political response but was now looking to move from emergency response to supporting the transition phase. The team were engaging with the MPS and other key agencies in response to ongoing protests.

7.3 Blue Lights Panel and Emergency Services:

- i. **Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)** – Resources had been directed towards policing the Black Lives Matter protests, which were expected to continue. A significant number of sporting and ceremonial events to which police resources were usually assigned had been cancelled but it was noted that the London Marathon had been postponed until 4 October and would be a major policing event. Further Brexit protests were expected, intelligence on which would be monitored through the summer months.
- ii. **City of London Police** – Officers would be supporting planned protests expected to take place in the following weeks. The Covid-19 command structure was still in place and would be until the end of June when it would be reviewed.
- iii. **British Transport Police (BTP)** – No representative was available to join the meeting. There was no update.
- iv. **London Ambulance Service (LAS)** – Work was in train to understand and adapt to the changing behaviours of the public in response to Covid-19, particularly in terms of adjusting the service response as the public had moved to accessing healthcare via 111 rather than 999. Efforts were being made to assess pressures on hospitals in implementing adequate social distancing in waiting rooms and to consider how the usual winter pressures would be managed.

- v. **London Fire Brigade (LFB)** – The LFB continued to provide a Category 1 emergency response, as it had done throughout the pandemic. Firefighters were continuing to assist the LAS and had helped distribute over 10 million items of personal protective equipment (PPE) throughout the health and social care sectors. The LFB stood ready to support emergency response partners throughout expected demonstrations and remained focused on preparedness for terrorism. Graham Ellis noted that he would be retiring from the LFB on 31 July 2020 and he thanked the LRF and LRG for their support and ongoing work. The Chair thanked Graham for his contributions to the LRF and wished him well in retirement.
- vi. **Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA)** – The MCA operations centres had been restricted to operational staff only throughout the pandemic. It was noted that while the Thames had generally been quiet during lockdown, normal business was resuming. The Thames Clipper service would resume on 15 June and other cruiser services would resume on 4 July, albeit with restricted capacity.

7.4 Local Authorities:

- i. **Local Authorities Panel (LAP)** – The LAP remained actively involved in the Covid-19 response, a key task of which would be to identify leads of the five sub-regional coordination groups being established following the inaugural meeting of the London Transition Board.
- ii. **London Councils** – The team continued to be fully engaged in the Covid-19 recovery work, with Cllr Peter John co-chairing, with the Mayor of London, the newly established London Recovery Board. Community tensions around inequalities and the Black Lives Matter movement were a key focus of borough leaders.

7.5 Health:

- i. **National Health Service (NHS)** – Covid-19 patients continued to be cared for across all NHS Trusts, with around 15% of beds being used for this purpose. Teams were considering how best to manage expected hot weather and the difficulty staff in care settings would have while continuing to wear full PPE. Consideration was also being given to the usual winter pressures faced by the NHS and what the impact of seasonal flu may be this year. A big increase in mental health patients had been noted and a review was underway into how best to care for and support them. The Chair noted her thanks to all NHS and PHE colleagues for their hard work over this period.
- ii. **Public Health England (PHE)** – Work on response to Covid-19 continued, with a particular emphasis on complex cases and links into care homes, prisons and schools. PHE were working closely with local authorities in response to localised outbreaks. There was a low level of reported cases in London and numbers would be monitored as lockdown measures were eased. The conclusions of the report into the impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities would be reviewed. While PHE's usual caseload had fallen away, a resurgence was expected later in the year around childhood immunisations, heatwaves, flu season and winter pressures. If lockdown measures continued through winter, or were

re-introduced later in the year, lower levels of transmission of seasonal flu could be expected. Demand for flu vaccines would be closely monitored.

- 7.6 **Environment Agency (EA)** – The EA had focused on contacting regulated sites during the Covid-19 response phase, but many had been closed. Compliance and enforcement checking were underway with inspectors undertaking inspections from vehicles from 15 June. There would be a move to broader enforcement activities from 1 July. Water reserves from the Thames and Lee rivers were well supplied and there had been no approaches from water companies around measures so far this year. Ground water resources were well stocked and were moving from above normal to normal levels.
- 7.7 **Transport Sector Panel (TSP)** – Transport for London (TfL) continued to maximise the service within operational constraints with the Tube running 90% of services. Timetable changes were being reviewed for the DLR, Overground and trams, while 21 Streetspace schemes had been delivered. Support from partners was sought on messaging around retiming journeys, using existing or new walking and cycling routes, and on the use of face coverings. Record breaking figures had been seen on cycling schemes, with over 20,000 codes redeemed for schemes for critical workers. The TSP were also working closely with MPS and other partners in response to protests.
- 7.8 **ACTION:** Forum Members to feedback to their organisations the request for support on messaging on travel times, walking and cycling routes, and use of face coverings on public transport.
- 7.9 **Network Rail** – A steady but small increase in passenger numbers returning to London’s termini stations had been recorded but numbers were still significantly down on what they would usually be. Occasional reports of overcrowding had been received and the latest report noted that around 40% of passengers were using face coverings. Network Rail were working towards an increase in service from 6 July and numbers would be monitored closely in the wake of non-essential shops opening for business. Brexit planning continued and discussions were being held with the Department for Transport about the risks associated with the end of the transition period potentially coinciding with lockdown measures being reintroduced at the end of the year. Plans for the delivery of a major disaster scenario exercise were still in development and it was expected that the scenario would be based in London.
- 7.10 **Thames Resilience Panel** – No representative was available to join the meeting. There was no update.
- 7.11 **Utilities Sector Panel (USP)** – The USP had been working closely with TfL on the Streetspace project as concerns had been raised around potential access difficulties. The demand profiles for gas, water and electricity had changed dramatically since the start of the lockdown and while demand for gas was low, water usage was a concern. It was expected that August would pose a particular risk as a significant proportion of the population that would usually holiday abroad, would remain in the country at a time when there is usually a notable reduction in demand. The demand for electricity was down 20%, which had the potential to make the network unstable. The USP had been working with the National Grid to ensure new mechanisms were in place to control any instability. Members also noted that Sarah Burchard

had left Thames Water. The Chair expressed her thanks to Sarah for her strong commitment and contribution to the LRF.

- 7.12 **Business Sector Panel** – No representative was available to join the meeting. There was no update.
- 7.13 **Voluntary Sector Panel (VSP)** – The VSP continued to provide capability across London as usual but with an additional focus on supporting community and voluntary sector organisations so they could focus on the Covid-19 response. The VSP had also been delivering weekly situation reports to community and voluntary sector subgroups.
- 7.14 **Faith Sector Panel** – Funeral standards had recently been revised and funerals could now take place in venues other than cemeteries and chapels. Work continued to assist faith and belief buildings reopening for individual prayer. Members also heard that the Archdeacon was representing the faith sector on the London Recovery Board.
- 7.15 **HQ London District** – The military were continuing to support the Covid-19 response, particularly in the form of setting up and manning Mobile Testing Units, the numbers of which would continue to expand. Public duties were at significantly reduced levels, but all were engaged in establishing how to return to business as usual in a compliant way.
- 7.16 **London Resilience Communication Group** – No representative was available to join the meeting. There was no update.
- 7.17 **Government (MHCLG)** – Work continued with LRFs on how to manage a second peak of Covid-19, should there be one, and it was suggested that the easing of lockdown measures would be kept under review. While there had been talk of stepping down the response, Members were assured that MHCLG would continue to provide support through Government Liaison Officers. Issues had also been raised about data flows from government so the team would continue to monitor the situation.
- 7.18 **London Resilience Group (LRG)** – The LRG continued to work on the response to Covid-19 and was beginning to focus on the transition phase. Partners would be contacted about the Work Programme in due course and Members were encouraged to keep in contact. The LSAS was due to move to a new hosting platform in the following weeks but the only noticeable difference to partners would be a new web address. The next Brexit Contingency Planning Group meeting would take place on 8 July and a summer preparedness event for the Mayors Chief of Staff and Deputy Mayors would take place at the end of June.

8 Any Other Business

- 8.1 There was no other business.

9 Dates of Next and Future Meetings

9.1 The dates of the next and future meetings were noted as follows:

Thursday 22 October 2020, 2pm at a venue to be confirmed

Thursday 25 February 2021, 2pm at a venue to be confirmed

9.2 It was suggested that, if it were safe to do so, the next meeting would be held in person. Members were also advised that as the LRF had fulfilled its statutory requirements for the year, the option of stepping down the next meeting in Autumn could be considered should there be a second peak of Covid-19 later in the year.